



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

chism, are the *faithful*, and such as die in the *faith of Christ*. All these must go to Purgatory before they go to heaven.

That *all*, and the best of us, have sinned, and do sin, cannot for a moment be denied. Let the following texts of Scripture be carefully examined on this head:—1 Kings viii. 46; Job xv. 14; xxv. 4; Ps. cxxx. 3; Pr. xx. 9; xxiv. 16; Eccl. vii. 20; 1 John i. 8.

The Blessed Virgin Mary herself is charged with errors and failings, even of want of faith, by many of the early Fathers, among whom we find Irenæus, Tertullian, Origen, Basil, Ambrose, Chrysostom, Theodoret, and Cyril of Alexandria.

Is Mr. Power prepared to assert that any one Christian dies without some taint of sin upon him, or wholly perfect? Now, Dr. Wiseman in his 11th Lecture, p. 57, vol. ii., London, 1851, writes—

"Moreover, we are assured in the New Law that 'nothing defiled shall enter' into the heavenly Jerusalem. Suppose, then, a Christian dies, *who had committed some slight transgression* [Is there any Christian who has not?], he cannot enter heaven in this state, and yet we cannot suppose that he is to be condemned for ever. What alternative, then, are we to admit? Why, that there is some place in which the soul will be purged of the sin, and qualified to enter into the glory of God. Will you say that God forgives all sin at the moment of death? Where is the warrant for that assertion? This is an *important point of doctrine*; and if you maintain that God at once forgives sins, on any occasion, you must allege strong authority for it. If you find nothing of such a doctrine in his revelation, but if, on the contrary, you are told—first, that no defilement can enter the kingdom of heaven; and, secondly, that some sins are forgiven in the next world, you must admit some means of purgation whereby the sinner, who has not incurred eternal punishment, is qualified for the enjoyment of God's glory."

Again, in explanation of the text from Rev. xxi. 27, we read in Keenan's "Controversial Catechism" (London, 1854), cap. xxi, sec. 2, p. 148—"There must be some place for the purification of souls after death; because the Scripture assures us, that even the *just man* falls seven times; and can any one in his senses suppose that many will not die without expiating these faults? With these they cannot enter heaven, which receiveth nothing defiled; they cannot be sent hell, for they are, according to Scripture, *just*; therefore, there must be a third place, where these failings of even the just man will be expiated."

Thus, then, it is very evident, that all Christians who do not die in mortal sins do go to Purgatory; they, nevertheless, are the *pious* who die in the *faith of Christ*.

I am quite aware that some Romanists assert that martyrs go direct to heaven and their sins are at once forgiven; but this is only a private opinion, and not a *doctrine* of the Church of Rome.

For instance, Keenan's Catechism (reference as above) in explaining away the text, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, for they shall rest from their labour," asserts that it "only alludes to martyrs and such as die free from all sin and debt of temporal punishment; and such, of course, required no purification." But this is not only an unsupported and unwarrantable interpretation of the text, to get over an obvious difficulty, but it assumes that any mortal can be declared to die "free from *all* sin;" free from (as Pope Gregory has it) of the lightest and most trivial sin for whom Purgatory is said to be reserved!

I think you, sir, at least, will agree with me, that I have made no "egregious blunder."

I am, sir, your obedient servant,

C. H. COLLETTE.

London, Nov. 18, 1854.

ON THE INFALLIBLE CHURCH.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CATHOLIC LAYMAN.

SIR—I will begin this letter by saying, it is true that if the infallibility of the Church were to depend on the natural weakness and fallibility of the members who compose her, the unbeliever might have some specious pretence for refusing to submit to her authority. But the eternal wisdom of the Father, who "reacheth from end to end strongly, and disposeth all things sweetly," took especial care to provide His chaste spouse on earth with an infallible guide, to preserve the integrity of that faith which He had purified in His blood.

Now, it would be unreasonable and preposterous that the Church, in the law of nature, or the Mosaic law, should be endowed with greater privileges than the Church in the law of grace; yet we find, from the beginning of the world to the promulgation of the new law, that all true believers had, ordinarily, no other grounds for their infallible faith than the infallibility of the Church, or body of faithful then existing, in proposing the traditions which she or they had received. And it would be repugnant to the wisdom of Christ, and He would have acted contrary to all other legislators, if He had left a law, mysterious from its own nature, and subject to a thousand different interpretations, from the various interests, prejudices, and passions of those for whom it was intended, without having constituted an infallible judge to expound its meaning. What more simple than the obedience required from Catholics to the dictates of a Church with which Christ has promised to abide for ever? There is no one so humble, so ignorant, or unlettered, but may

safely follow this rule, which, with a Divine and admirable impartiality, renders the attainment of saving faith equally easy to all.

Common sense tells us, sir, that the Church which our Lord founded on earth, ought to possess the power of teaching by authority; and it is sufficiently clear that this is the only method whereby—

First—The ignorant, the dull of apprehension, and those who have not leisure to examine the Scriptures—that is to say, the greater part of mankind—can be at all instructed; whereby—

Secondly—The learned themselves can be so instructed as to remove all fluctuation and doubt from their minds; whereby—

Thirdly—Both learned and ignorant are furnished with the same motives of belief, and the same foundation for their faith; whereby—

Fourthly—All heresies, schisms, and dissensions about religion, are prevented; whereby—

Fifthly—The spirit of peace, of meekness, of humility, of diffidence in ourselves, of submission and obedience—that is to say, the characteristic virtues of a disciple of Christ—are inculcated, and are formed in us; whereby, that pride and presumption of the human heart, which, as St. Paul says, "raiseth itself up against the knowledge of God," is beaten down and subdued, and every understanding is made captive to the obedience of faith; whereby we are guarded against the wildness of imagination, the illusions of self-love, the spirit of party, the bias of education, the influence of prejudice, and so many sources of error and vice; whereby, in short, that holy, that rational, that amiable religion, which Christ brought down from heaven as a blessing to mankind, can be taught, can be enforced, and can be constantly maintained.

Now, as the method of instructing by authority is that which answers all these heavenly purposes, and leads man to virtue and happiness, in a manner conformable to his nature; and as the contrary method, whereby people are desired to shake off authority and judge for themselves, naturally leads to so great evils, and is so ill suited to the state and condition of mankind, it follows, undeniably, I repeat, that the Church of Christ has, and ought to have, power to exercise it. Indeed, Mr. Editor, in matters of faith and religion, we must be as humble and obedient to the Catholic Church as young children to their parents. "Amen, I say to you, whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a child, shall not enter into it."—St. Luke.

I remain, Sir,

Your very obedient servant,

WILLIAM ROURKE.

Passage.

Mr. Rourke observes that "from the beginning of the world to the promulgation of the new law, all true believers had, ordinarily, no other grounds for their infallible faith than the infallibility of the Church or body of faithful then existing." In saying this, he must surely have forgotten the state of the Jewish Church in the time of our Blessed Lord. We ask him, where was *then* the infallibility of the Church, at a time when of all others she most needed to be rightly instructed on the question of our Lord's claim to be the promised Messiah? Were not the chief priests and scribes our Lord's bitterest enemies? Did they not threaten to put out of the synagogue every Jew that believed on Him, and did they not finally condemn Him to death? Surely, if Mr. Rourke reflects on this for a moment, he cannot but see that the case of the Jewish Church is fatal to his favourite theory of infallibility. We have stated more than once that the Jews, as a visible existing Church, had far clearer evidences of divine guidance and instruction than any that the Church of Rome can point out. Yet we know that on the most important of all questions, the heads of the Jewish Church proved false and treacherous guides: and, if our Lord's hearers had not exercised their private judgment—if they had not "searched the Scriptures" which testified of Him, not one of them would have ever attained to a saving knowledge of the Gospel. What Pope of the Church of Rome could ever truly say that he prophesied, and spoke under the influence of the Holy Ghost? Yet we are told in Scripture that Caiaphas, who was high priest in the time of our Lord, did this, in virtue of the office that he held.—John xi. 51. And, nevertheless, he was the most active conspirator against the life of our blessed Lord. Arguing *a priori*, we might say, "what more simple than the obedience required" from a Jew "to the dictates of a Church with which God promised to abide? There is no one so humble, so ignorant or unlettered, but may safely follow this rule." Yet it is plain that if the Jews in our Lord's time had followed this *safe* and *simple* rule, they would most certainly have perilled their eternal salvation; and from hence we conclude that the promises which God has left to his Church, never can dispense with the duty incumbent on each member of the Church, to satisfy himself of the truth and reasonableness of the doctrines which she teaches.

We fully admit that the Church possesses the power of teaching by authority; all that we deny is, that this authority is an *infallible* authority. The example which Mr. Rourke adduces at the close of his letter sufficiently illustrates this distinction. Every parent has an autho-

rity over his child, to which the child is bound to submit; yet the parent is not infallible. He may command his child to do what is wrong, and if the child's moral faculties are sufficiently instructed to know this, it is clearly his duty to disobey his earthly parent, and to "obey God rather than man." It may, doubtless, seem to us, that mankind would have been placed in a more safe and secure position, as regards their spiritual welfare, if they were not exposed to the perils arising from error and unbelief, if no heresies existed in the Church, to draw the unwary from the truth—if, in short, the path to virtue and happiness was as plain and easy as Mr. Rourke would fain represent it. But the simple answer to all this is, that God has not willed it so. He has seen fit to place us in a position where we must exercise habits, not of blind, unquestioning submission to authority, but of sober, rational inquiry. These precautions are necessary, to secure our temporal welfare; and they are almost equally necessary for our spiritual well-being. In short, to use the words of the Apostle, it is our duty to "prove all things, and hold fast that which is good."—1 Thess. v. 21.

ON PURGATORY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CATHOLIC LAYMAN.

SIR—I have been brought up a Catholic, but have lived several years in a Protestant family, and amongst them the second coming of our Blessed Saviour and the end of the world are often talked of as being very near.

Now, without troubling myself as to whether or not they are right in the opinion of some of them hold on this matter, I do confess that I am troubled in my mind about one point connected with the end of the world, and the more I think of it the more it puzzles me. I would ask the question myself from a priest, but I was once told when I made an inquiry about another subject, "that such questions were only a tempting of God to take away my faith." The answer quieted me at that time, but I do not say and do not think it would satisfy me now.

The family I live in takes the CATHOLIC LAYMAN, and, as you must know, there have been many papers in it about Purgatory from both Catholic and Protestant, still there is one question about it that (as far as I have seen in these papers) has never been publicly asked, and, what is more, I have never read a word about it in any Catholic prayer-book I have now, or ever have had. It is not mentioned in any way in either the Daily Companion, the Garden of the Soul, the Key of Paradise, the Manna of the Soul, the Missal, or the Office for the Dead, or the notes to the Douay Bible. I can find no reference to it in either the double or single Douay Catechism, or any English or Irish one; still I do not mean to say that it has never been alluded to or explained, but only that I have never been able to find any mention of it.

Sir, I have not much expectation that you can tell me anything satisfactory on the subject; but I do hope that some one or other of the Catholic gentlemen who have written you such long and learned letters may assist you in doing away with my difficulty—I may say not mine only, but that of many others with whom I have talked about it. What I want to know is this—supposing the Protestant notion to be true, that the end of the world is really near at hand—say next week, or next month, or next year—what will become of me if I should die in venial sins so shortly before the Day of Judgment that I should not have time to atone for them by the pains of purgatory, or should not be released by masses or the private prayers of my relations and friends, or be taken out of Purgatory by the Blessed Virgin on account of the scapular, or any other of the means the Church has appointed for the release or relief of the souls in purgatory—I ask again, what is to become of me?

Ought I to be received in Heaven with some of my sins unsatisfied for, or must I be sent to Hell for sins that I have been taught do not deserve eternal punishment?

I know that you, sir, can get rid of my question at once by saying that you do not believe in purgatory, and that there is no use in your arguing about it. But I would gladly impress on you that to Catholics purgatory is a very terrible reality, which no unbelief on your part can destroy.

We have the testimony of many fathers of the Church to the fact of there being a purgatory; and that angelic doctor, St. Thomas, says—"That the pains of it exceed the pains which Jesus Christ suffered in his holy passion, which, notwithstanding, were the most bitter that ever any creature endured in this life; over and above which they are no tortures for an hour or a day, as those of this world, but they may, and do, last twenty, thirty, or a hundred years."

My mother has been dead more than fifty years, and prayers are still said for her on her anniversary. Her life was not half the length that mine has been, and I cannot think she committed more sins than I have done; yet the priests evidently show, by taking money for celebrating mass for her, that they think she still requires to be prayed for. What then, I ask for the third time, is to become of me if I should die within a short time of the Day of Judgment?

Sir, you say you are sincerely anxious that people should know what they ought to believe and trust to. Will you add your request to my supplication, that some of your